



September 2008

The Rights Stuff

Mental Health Rights Coalition

Our Mission: To encourage, enable and empower the voice and participation of consumers in the mental health system in Hamilton.

Drop In and Peer Support Hours:
11a.m- 4p.m,
Mon - Fri



A few of the volunteers with some of the people who drop in regularly to the Kings Way Blessing Centre at 649 King Street East in Hamilton. Joanne, Norman, Shelley, Crystal, Johnny, Maureen, Morgan and Debbie were on hand the day we visited.

Free Food and Friendship at the King's Way Blessing Centre

On a slow day at the King's Way Blessing Centre at 649 King Street E., there could be 250 people stop by for one of the many services available. Shelley, who has volunteered at the centre since it opened explains people come for food, clothing, or furnishings which are all free for anyone who needs them. Busy days in the winter the centre feeds up to 350 people and numbers are growing.

Norm, who is a regular, says, "This place means happiness, kindness and loving. It has changed my life and I meet people I can believe and trust," he says.

Robert another regular says, "They feed me every day. This is a place I can relax."

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Ontario Trillium Grant to Train Peer Supporters in the Province.

A recent announcement by the Trillium Foundation gives \$196, 200 to the Ontario Peer Development Initiatives to train peer supporters.

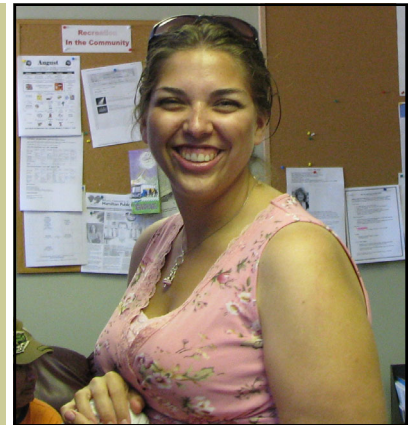
A press release from OPDI states, "In researched studies and pilot projects, peer support has saved many millions of dollars through shortened hospital stays and reduced readmissions, and has improved the lives of people with serious mental illness in many ways", says Deborah Sherman, Executive Director of OPDI.

While several CSIs in the province have initiated their own peer training courses and manuals, most have no consistent processes. Through this project OPDI will bring together the most effective good practices of all to create a train-the-trainer program all Ontario peer-run organizations can access.

More information on this exciting development will be published in next months 'The Rights Stuff'.

Scope Awards and AGM

Our Annual Scope Awards and Annual General Meeting are September 15th—details on page 3



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Members and staff of MHRC along with some community partners honoured Amy Rogers for her contribution over the past two years at a party on August 14. Amy is leaving her position as Peer Support Coordinator at MHRC to return to school. She promises she won't be a stranger. We all wish Amy the very best for her future and expect her to include us in her urban planning endeavours. .



Executive Director: Frances Jewell

Where did the summer go? Well, let's face it. We say that every year but

this summer has not been the typical hot, sunny summer we have become used to in southern Ontario. I must say I am enjoying the lush growth in the garden. The trees look bigger and greener than they have for some time.

Unlike many parents, my mother said she felt sad when we went back to school. I think she enjoyed the time off each summer as much as we did. We camped at Turkey Point with two other families for six weeks most summers. We cooked breakfast on the campfire and when the sun went down watched National Film Board of Canada movies at the outdoor theatre. We counted fireflies and listened to the call of the whippoorwill. We swam for hours, built

sandcastles and ate fries and foot long hotdogs from The Green Booth. Life was good. But as September approached we saw the daylight hours diminish and we knew that all too soon we would be back in the routine of school. As September approaches I feel a sense of loss as I do every year. Another summer passes; soon I will be a year older and a year farther away from the fond memories of my childhood. Each year I make the trek back to the lake sometimes for a week or some years just a day on the beach. Memories from days gone by are important to me and just as important are doing new things to create new memories. Each year I try to do new things and visit new places.

For the past several years I have taken in the local festivals and the musical talent. This year was no exception. Recently, I attended the Festival of Friends for Woodstock Night. The music that night was

great! John Sebastian, Country Joe... you remember "Give me an F!"... and Canned Heat.

The night took me back to a summer long time ago. Memories can be great. So get out there and have some fun creating a memory or two for yourself.

Seeking Donations

If you or anyone you know might have access to fresh fruit or would like donate toward the purchase of fruit we would like to be able to provide it for our members each weekday.

For more information contact us at
MHRC

678 Main St E, Ste. 102- Hamilton, ON L8M 1K2

Phone: 905-545-2525 Facsimile: 905-545-0211 Email: mentalhealthrights@bellnet.ca

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This issue of The Rights Stuff is a little shorter than usual and printed a couple of weeks earlier because I will be on vacation by the time you get it.

For those of you who read last months issue—yes I will be spending a great deal of time in my kayak, providing the weather cooperates.

Vacations are the medicine most often prescribed for those of us who work in mental health but are often the medicine which is hardest to take. It is not easy to leave people and situations which need our attention.

September marks six months for me at MHRC and it has been an interesting time indeed. The city isn't quite so frightening for me and I finally figured out north from south. Being used to having to the water to my south at home, it took a while to get oriented to

having water to the north.

I am still in awe at people who travel the buses and will have to make it a project to learn how to get somewhere on a bus.

Since I arrived here there has been constant change and here we go again. With Amy leaving we have begun some restructuring at MHRC which includes a sort of "melting" of the Peer Support and Administrative Assistant jobs. We are trying it out for a few months to see if works. For the next few months I become the "go to person" for peer support.

I am looking forward to beginning a training program for Peer Support in the fall along with another training for Voices of Experience. Watch next months newsletter for information.

FOR SUPPORT...



Give Us A Call! A Peer Support Worker is available Monday to Friday, 11a.m.-4p.m.

Peer Support Matches Available

Any consumer looking for ongoing peer support by a trained volunteer is encouraged to call the Peer Support Coordinator, Amy Rogers, at 905-545-2525.



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Our Mission is to encourage, enable, and empower the voice and participation of consumer/survivors in the mental health system.

Up Coming Events

Annual General Meeting

This meeting is open to the public—only consumer members are allowed to vote. Those wishing to vote must register before 10:30 a.m.

Monday, September 15

Registration 10:00—10:30

Guest Speaker—Mary-Lou Martin

Business Meeting—11:30—noon

Noon Light Lunch 12-1

Scope Awards

Scope Awards 1-3

Emmaus Place—35 Aikman Ave.

Hamilton, ON

Those attending the Scope Awards are invited to join us for a light lunch

Nomination for Scope Award closed on August 15, 2008.

Peer Support Training

Next 10 week session begins October 8 at 9 a.m. Runs on Wednesday morning through to December 10. Please contact us or visit the web site for more information and registration details. <http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca/Active%20pages/ps.html>

Voices of Experience Training

Training begins Monday, October 27 at 1 p.m. and runs through November 24

For more information contact us at MHRC or visit our website at <http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca/Active%20pages/voe.html>

No need to be Bored in this City

Life Long Learning Week— September 15—21, 2008: An impressive list of events which promote literacy and life long learning can be found at

<http://www.abea.on.ca/llw/calendar.php>

Great listings of local events at this web site.

<http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton>

Mental Health and Addictions 101 on line study

Peer Support Workers and consumers may find a new on line tutorial helpful for their information and for ongoing training in peer support. The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health has recently produced an online tutorial about mental illnesses. Each tutorial takes about 20 minutes to go through and provide valuable information.

To access the course “Mental Health and Addictions 101 visit www.camh.net/mha101. If you have a pop up blocker on your computer you may need to shut it off temporarily to access the courses.

MHRC Peer Support Workers are asked to upgrade their skills by working on those topics in italics in the following list.

Tutorials include

- Anxiety Disorders
- Bipolar disorder
- *Concurrent Disorder*
- Depression
- *Harm Reduction*
- *Intro to Addiction*
- *Intro to Mental Health*
- Older Adults
- Personality Disorders
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia
- *Stages of Change*
- Stigma

Views and opinions expressed in this newsletter represent those of individual contributors, and not necessarily of The Mental Health Rights Coalition.

Free Food and Friendship at the Blessing Centre

(Continued from page 1)

A few minutes of hope and safety” is what is offered at the centre according to Maureen Tillet who manages the site for Centre for Excellence (<http://www.centreforexcellence.org/>). Maureen left a management position and Shelley, who manages the drop in, left her work as a nurse to run the centre. Both are very enthusiastic about the work.

“We are faith based but secularly run,” says Maureen. “No one here forces religion down anyone’s throat,” she assures. “We also don’t want to reinvent the wheel and provide service that someone else already has,” she added.

There are some basic rules at the Blessing Centre about not swearing, using drugs or alcohol and general good manners but other than that people are free to come and go on weekdays from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm for breakfast and lunch and then again from 4 to 7 for supper. The centre is also open on Saturdays from 9:30 to 1:30.

Many of the people who started attending the centre when it opened this past winter are now it’s volunteers. Maureen explains the philosophy is one which hopes to “equip and help people.” She quotes the brochure by saying, “We hope to transform our community one life at a time.”

Fortino’s, Caesar Pizza and a local Tim Horton’s are the greatest source of donations for the centre but they are open to other donations as well.

Besides the busy food area there is another section to one side which is being transformed into a learning centre. In the fall the group hope to begin a computer training program, a literacy group and a life skills group for single mothers with small children.

If people want prayer they can also find that kind of support in a quiet side room. Maureen says on Sunday, many of the people who come to the centre attend the supporting church, The Revival Centre, on Emerald Street.

The centre is part of Eagle Worldwide Ministries based in Copetown, Ontario.

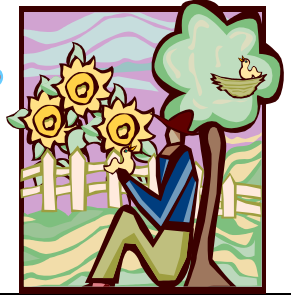
<http://www.centreforexcellence.org/>
<http://www.centreforexcellence.org/data/kingsway.pdf>

























September

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Labour Day Closed	2 Paint T Shirts 	3 Backgammon 	4 Air Hockey 	5 	6
7	8 Cards 	9 Movie—Rush Hour 2—Action 	10 Air Hockey 	11 Karaoke 	12  Movie “Children of Men” - Sci Fi	13
14	15 Movie 	16 Karaoke 	17 Cribbage 	18 Card Games 	19 Air Hockey 	20
21	22 Bingo 	23 Air Hockey 	24 Birthday Club  Karaoke 	25 Movie 	26 Water Colours 	27
28	29 Karaoke con-test 	30 Walk to coffee shop 	<p>Activities are scheduled for 1 p.m. unless otherwise indicated</p> <p>There is no HPS trip in September—October trip will be to the Norfolk County Fair in Simcoe</p> <p>Regularly attending members will be given priority for trips.</p>			